Claims

1.   (Currently amended) A method of handling a resource request made by a client in a client network. , the network including by a Generic Local Lookup Service (GLLS) in located at a ~~client~~ network edge and a Generic Domain Lookup System (GDLS) located at a location remote from the ~~client~~ network edge, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a resource request at the GLLS from the said a client ~~in the client network~~, the resource request identifying the requested resource;

~~the GLLS~~ forwarding the resource request from the GLLS to the GDLS

~~the GDLS~~ searching a database in the GDLS for a resource record associated with the requested resource ~~the resource record including a series of executable instructions~~;

the GDLS analysing a set of resource providers and determining the resource providers compatible with the resource request;

~~the GDLS~~ transmitting a response containing a list of resource providers from the GDLS to the GLLS, the list including server selection criteria associated with the resource providers;

the GLLS selecting the best resource provider in the list according to the server selection criteria and additional client information relating to a client performance characteristic; and

the GLLS ~~executing the executable instructions to facilitate providing~~ returning data to the client which identifies ~~the~~ best resource provider for the requested resource ~~to the client by the best resource provider~~.

2.   (Currently amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the additional client information is added to the resource request by the said client ~~relating to a client performance to characteristic. client location in the network and access speed~~.

3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Currently amended) A method according to Claim 12 wherein the additional client information is added to the resource request after said resource request is received at the GLLS from the client.

6.   (Cancelled)

7.   (Cancelled)

8.   (Currently amended) A method according to Claim 1, further comprising the steps of the GLLS:

converting the resource request into a form ~~operable~~ processable by the GDLS; and

transmitting the converted resource request to the GDLS.

9.   (Cancelled)

10.   (Cancelled)

11.   (Cancelled)

12.   (Cancelled)

13.   (Cancelled)

14.   (Cancelled)

15.   (Cancelled)

16.   (Cancelled)

17.   (Cancelled).

18.   (Cancelled)

19. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the resource request is a DNS record and the information in the resource request is contained within an additional DNS text field forming part of the DNS record.

20. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the response transmitted by the GDLS is a DNS record and the server selection criteria of the compatible resource providers are contained within an additional DNS text field forming part of the DNS record.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently amended) A DNS record for conveying a response to a resource request message from a GDLS, at a location remote to a ~~client~~ network edge , to a GLLS ~~in the~~ at a ~~client~~ network edge, comprising a user-defined text-field for specifying cContent sSelection cCriteria for finding a preferred resource provider for providing a requested resource; the preferred resource provider being defined by the resource provider that is most compatible with the requested resource.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) A scaleable architecture for handling a resource request from a client ~~in a client network~~, the resource request comprising a first identity of a resource provider, the architecture comprising:

a GLLS ~~in the client~~ at a network edge for identifying a preferred resource provider for providing the requested resource to the client ~~from a preferred resource provider~~ in response to receiving the resource request from the client, said preferred resource provider being defined by ~~as~~ the resource provider that is most compatible with the resource request with respect to Content Selection Criteria contained in the resource request; and

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a GDLS at a location remote from the client network for returning <u>data identifying</u> a set of resource providers <u>and including server selection criteria associated with the resource providers</u> in response to receip~~tving~~ <u>of</u> a converted resource request from the GLLS<u>,</u>

<u>the GLLS being operable to select et preferred resource provider based on eth server selection criteria and additional client information relating to a client performance characteristic</u>.

28. (Currently amended) An architecture according to claim 27, wherein the resource request <u>from the client</u> further comprises <u>the additional client</u> information <u>relating to a client</u> ~~on the client~~ <u>performance characteristic</u>, ~~and the preferred resource provider is defined as the resource provider that is most compatible with the additional client information; wherein the GLLS further comprises a comparator for comparing the returned set of resource providers with information on the client to produce an ordered list of resource providers with the preferred resource provider first~~.

29. (Previously presented) An architecture according to claim 28, further comprising a content distribution point manager (CDPM) associated with the GDLS, the CDPM holding information on resource providers, said CDPM configured to provide information on all known resource providers able to supply the requested resource on receiving a query from the GLLS corresponding to the resource request received by the GLLS.

30. (Currently amended) A computer readable storage medium storing instructions that, when executed on entities within a network, cause the entities to perform a method for handling a resource request, the method comprising the steps of;

receiving a resource request at a GLLS <u>located at in</u> a ~~client~~ network <u>edge</u> from a client in the client network, the resource request identifying the requested resource;

~~the GLLS~~ forwarding the resource request <u>from the GLLS</u> to a GDLS at a location remote from the ~~client~~ network <u>edge</u>;

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~~the GDLS~~ searching a database <u>in the GDLS</u> for a resource record associated with the requested resource the resource record including a series of executable instructions;

the GDLS analysing a set of resource providers and determining the resource providers compatible with the resource request;

~~the GDLS~~ transmitting a response containing a list of resource providers <u>from the GDLS</u> to the GLLS, the list including server selection criteria associated with the resource providers;

the GLLS selecting the best resource provider in the list according to the server selection criteria<u> and additional client information relating to a client performance characteristic</u>; and

the GLLS ~~executing the executable instructions to facilitate providing~~<u>returning data to the client which identifies</u> the best resource provider for <u></u> the requested resource<u>.</u> ~~to the client by the best resource provider.~~

31.   (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 2, wherein the server selection criteria includes information on one of the group comprising: a response time of said resource provider, a load on said resource provider, a distance to the resource provider from the client, and a throughput of the resource provider.

32.   (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the requested resource is available on the resource provider but is not available on the GLLS.

33.   (Previously presented) A communications network comprising the scaleable architecture as claimed in claim 27.

34.   (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the list of resource providers transmitted by the GDLS is in order of their compatibility with the resource request, the most compatible resource provider placed first.

35.   (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the GLLS includes a Content Distribution Point Manager (CDPM), the CDPM adapted to provide information about local resource providers within an ISP domain.

36. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the GDLS includes a Content Distribution Point Manager (CDPM), the CDPM adapted to provide information about resource providers throughout the network.

37. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the additional client information includes the client location in the network.

38. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the additional client information includes the client access speed.